

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 152228 TOSEC 070054
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:S/S:FGWISNER

APPROVED BY:S/S-MR WISNER

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O 151717Z JUN 78 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 152228 TOSEC 070054

NODIS

CHEROKEE FOR TARNOFF ONLY FROM WISNER

FOLLOWING REPEAT HAVANA 1346 ACTION SECSTATE MAY 20

QUOTE S E C R E T HAVANA 1346

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM LANE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, US, CU

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

REF: STATE 127459, HAVANA 1329

1. I WAS CALLED TO FIRST VICE MINISTER ANILLO'S OFFICE TONIGHT, MAY 19, AT 10:30P.M. TO BE SHOWN THE LATEST AP AND UP REPORTS COVERING TODAY'S PRESS BRIEFING AT THE DEPARTMENT. IN LIGHT OT THESE REPORTS, ANILLO SAID, HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT TO GIVE ME CERTAIN COMMENTS. THESE HE READ TO ME FROM AN INFORMAL PAPER, A COPY OF WHICH HE THEN GAVE ME. THERE

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FOLLOWS A FREE TRANSLATION OF HIS REMARKS:

2. BEGIN QUOTE. IF THIS IS ACCURATE (THE WIRE SERVICE REPORTS) IT IS SERIOUS. AS WAS EXPLAINED TO YOU CATEGORICALLY WE HAVE NOT HAD RELATIONS WITH THE KATANGANS SINCE THE WAR IN ANGOLA TERMINATED MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO, NOR SINCE THE WAR FINISHED HAVE WE TRAINED OR GIVEN ANY ARMAMENT (TO THE KATANGANS). WE HAVE NOT HAD THE SLIGHTEST

PARTICIPATION EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY IN EITHER OF THE TWO KATANGAN ACTIONS IN SHABA. THE REASONS WHY WE DID NOT SEE THAT ACTIVITY WITH ANY SYMPATHY WERE ALSO EXPLAINED TO YOU. WE NEVER TELL LIES; IN THE HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTION THERE IS NOT ONE CASE WHERE OUR GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD A LIE TO ANYONE. IT IS TRULY IRRITATING THAT AFTER LEAKING THE NEWS ABOUT COMRADE FIDEL'S WORDS TO YOU THERE SHOULD NOW APPEAR A PUBLIC DECLARATION MAKING THESE IMPUTATIONS WHICH PRESENT THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA AS MAKING FALSE AFFIRMATIONS. WE CONSIDER THE DECLARATIONS OF RESTON ABSOLUTELY DISHONEST AND AN ACT OF BAD FAITH. WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY A CONSTRUCTIVE GESTURE ON OUR PART SHOULD BE MET IN THIS WAY. THE GESTURE OF COMRADE FIDEL IN RECEIVING YOU AND GIVING EXPLANATIONS TO YOU RESPONDED TO THE GESTURE WHICH SOME IMPORTANT OFFICIALS OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT HAVE IN TURN MADE RECENTLY TO OFFICERS OF OUR INTERESTS SECTION IN WASHINGTON AND TO THE CONTENTS OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS. THERE IS NOTHING EXTRAORDINARY IN THAT; WE KNOW THAT OUR PRESIDENT ENJOYED HAVING THAT CONTACT WITH YOU, AND HE REGRETS THAT SOME OTHER PERSONS HAVE BEHAVED INCORRECTLY, VIOLATING THE DISCRETION ACCORDED. OUR PRESIDENT KNOWS THAT YOU HAVE NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THAT. HE RECOGNIZES THE PROMPT RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO HIS MESSAGE. GIVEN THE FACT OF THE DECLARATION OF THE SPOKESMAN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TODAY THERE REMAINS NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO DRAW THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY IN THE UNITED STATES PEOPLE INTERESTED IN PLACING OBSTACLES IN COMMUNICATION AND CREATING DIFFICULTIES. THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA HOPES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SECRET

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UNITED STATES WILL RECTIFY THE IMPUTATIONS OF ITS SPOKESMAN. END QUOTE.

3. WHEN I ASKED ANILLO WHETHER HE HAD ANY RESPONSE TO YOUR SUGGESTION OF A CONFIDENTIAL MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ IN NEW YORK NEXT WEEK HE REFERRED ME BACK TO THE ABOVE STATEMENT. THUS IT APPEARS THAT UNLESS THERE IS SOME PUBLIC "RECTIFICATION" OF THE SPOKESMAN'S REMARKS, RODRIGUEZ WILL NOT BE DISPOSED TO MEET WITH YOU DURING THE SSOD.

4. COMMENT: WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY BUGGING THE CUBANS IS THE RENEWED ALLEGATION BY THE SPOKESMAN DESPITE CASTRO'S DENIAL TO ME THAT THEY HAVE CONTINUED TO BE IN TOUCH WITH THE KATANGAN REBELS AND IN FACT TRAINED THEM FOR THE CURRENT INVASION OF SHABA. ANILLO COMMENTED THAT THE SPOKESMAN'S REMARKS HAD OFFSET THE POSITIVE IMPRESSION MADE BY YOUR PROMPT MESSAGE TO MALMIERCA, WHICH HE TERMED "CONSTRUCTIVE." I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING FURTHER CAN BE GAINED BY PUSHING HERE FOR THE MEETING WITH RODRIGUEZ, ALTHOUGH I BELIEVE THAT SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE VERY DESIRABLE TO DISCUSS NOT ONLY THE SHABA INCIDENT BUT ALSO THE WHOLE RANGE OF PROBLEMS IN U.S.-CUBAN RELATIONS. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A MEETING BE RUINED AGAIN THROUGH THE CUBAN MISSION IN NEW YORK AFTER

RODRIGUEZ ARRIVES NEXT WEEK.

LANE. UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, ARMED FORCES, CAT-C, CHEROKEE 05/20/78, ALLEGATIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE152228
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/S:FGWISNER
Enclosure: REPEAT OF HAVANA 1346
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: N780005-0491
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780655/aaaabvba.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 39836088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: 78 STATE 127459, 78 HAVANA 1329
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2335693
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RESPONSE TO SECRETARY'S MESSAGE
TAGS: PFOR, PSDC, US, CU, CG, (MALMIERCA PEOLI, ISIDORO OCTAVIO), (VANCE, CYRUS R)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/39836088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014